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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [KBTS](#) [UNSC](#) [UNOMIG](#) [RS](#) [GG](#)
SUBJECT: GEORGIA: FM VASHADZE DISCUSSES UNOMIG WITH A/S
GORDON

REF: A. STATE 59890
[1](#)B. USUN 583
[1](#)C. TBILISI 984

Classified By: Ambassador John F. Tefft for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. In a June 10 meeting focused almost exclusively on the UN negotiations, Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze made clear that Georgia would stick to its redlines, even if it meant ultimately killing a UN mission in Georgia. EUR Assistant Secretary Philip Gordon pushed back hard, challenging Vashadze to consider what the loss of a UN mission would actually mean; Vashadze made clear that Georgia had considered that issue very carefully, and it believed that the limited impact UN has on the ground, which Russia undermines anyway, is not worth any erosion in the international community's recognition of Georgia's territorial integrity. Gordon sketched out the best mandate possible in the current environment, and Vashadze showed little willingness to accept even that. Recognizing that the negotiations are at an impasse, Vashadze proposed a technical rollover as a way to put the burden squarely on the Russians either to accept a continuation or to be the ones to kill the mission. Gordon said that the worst possible outcome would be for Georgia and the U.S. to end up in different places. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) A/S Gordon, accompanied by the Ambassador, began the UNOMIG discussion by saying that the worst possible outcome would be for Georgia and the U.S. to end up at different places in the negotiations. He therefore wanted to discuss details with Vashadze in order to have a clear idea of what might be possible. He noted that right now, the process seems to be an impasse, with both Russia and Georgia laying down demands that seem to irreconcilable. He encouraged Vashadze to be as flexible as possible, because it looks extremely unlikely that a resolution and mandate that respect Georgia's stated redlines can be reached. In particular, he said a direct reference to Georgia's territorial integrity would not pass (it might be possible to include an indirect reference via UNSCR 1808, although even that was unsure); a name including Georgia would not pass; and no operative paragraph based on the Sarkozy agreements is likely to pass.

[1](#)3. (C) FM Vashadze made clear that Georgia is prepared to kill a mandate that it believes undermines Georgia's territorial integrity, rather than compromise that fundamental principle for the sake of a continued UN presence in Abkhazia. A/S Gordon pushed hard on this, asking in several different ways whether the Georgians had considered the impact on the ground of the loss of a UN mission. Vashadze responded that the Georgians had been discussing this intensively since January (just before the previous "technical rollover plus" was passed), and that yes, the government was well aware of what this position meant. The limited security protections on the ground were not worth the

international legal concessions Georgia would have to make. He noted that the current UN mission is not doing much to protect the security of Abkhazia or its population, and a new mission would not either. The Russians are already violating the existing mandate, and they would violate a new mandate beginning on day one. A/S Gordon noted that at least there would be a mandate, the violations of which could be recorded; Vashadze countered that there is a Sarkozy-brokered ceasefire agreement, the violations of which are being recorded -- but without having any impact on Russian behavior. Deputy FM Giga Bokeria noted that a mission with executive police, and a fully demilitarized zone, would be far more likely to make a real difference in the lives of the local population, and the Georgians would have to think carefully about such a proposal -- but that is not what is on the table.

14. (C) Vashadze also pointed out that the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) will still be in place. A/S Gordon replied that we have heard that the Europeans cannot afford to leave their monitors all by themselves without a UN mission in place; Vashadze said the Georgians were hearing different things from the Europeans. In fact the Estonian FM had told him just the day before that the EUMM would stay no matter what happened with UNOMIG, and they had received other such messages from elsewhere. Vashadze and Bokeria both suggested that the Europeans may be making such statements in order to encourage the U.S. and Georgia to be more flexible. Vashadze also noted that compromising on territorial integrity in the mandate would open the government to intense criticism within Georgia, criticism that Bokeria said would be quite valid, because the government would not have done its duty to

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protect the country. Both noted that virtually everyone associated with the 1994 Moscow Agreement, which enabled Russia to begin this process of undermining Georgia's territorial integrity, ended up an internal political outcast.

15. (C) Early in the meeting, Vashadze sketched out a compromise deal the Georgians could live with: reference to UNSCR 1808 and all previous resolutions; a name with Georgia; and clear basis in the Sarkozy agreements. Absent these elements, Vashadze said Georgia could not accept a mandate. After considerable discussion, the Assistant Secretary sketched out what he thought would be the best deal possible right now (although making clear that he could not guarantee even these points): a reference to UNSCR 1808; a reference to the Sarkozy agreements in the preambular language and in the call for a UNSYG report on their implementation; but no reference to Georgia in the name. He then asked if the Georgians could live with such a resolution/mandate. Vashadze did not quite say no, but he said it would be very difficult. He and Bokeria both explained that giving up Georgia in the name would be a huge step backward for Georgia and a huge victory for Russia in its quest to erode Georgia's territorial integrity. Although the Georgians found the reference to 1808 (versus an explicit reference to territorial integrity) acceptable in the previous technical rollover resolution, they would find it harder to accept in a resolution establishing a whole new mission; again, it would be a huge step backward for them and a huge victory for the Russians, especially if at the same time Georgia did not appear in the name.

16. (C) Vashadze recognized that it is unlikely that language acceptable to both Russia and Georgia could be found at this point. He therefore proposed a technical rollover. He said that Georgia was prepared to go it alone, killing an unacceptable mandate even if the U.S. decided it could not afford to jeopardize an improved relationship with Russia and therefore supported a compromise resolution. However, he said that if the U.S., and ideally the Europeans, were willing to stand with Georgia and propose a technical rollover, then Russia would find itself in the position of

either going along or being the one to kill a second international mission within a few months. He predicted that Russia will panic if the U.S. hangs tough and presents Russia with that choice. If a technical rollover passes, Vashadze noted that we will have retained the name of UNOMIG, the presence of a UN mission (which not only protects security but reminds the world there is an ongoing conflict), and Georgia's claim to territorial integrity, while avoiding legitimizing Russia's "new reality."

¶7. (C) A/S Gordon did not commit to taking Vashadze's suggestion and pursuing a technical rollover. He did repeat his statement that the worst possible case would be for the U.S. and Georgia to end up at different places, because in that scenario, first, the U.S. would appear unwilling to stand up to Russia and Georgia would be blamed; and second, there would be no UN mission. He also said that ultimately, the Georgians must be the ones to judge what is best for their country. Finally, if the mission is not renewed, he said we are better off if Russia is the one blamed. Vashadze said we are better off if Russia is the one blamed. Vashadze provided the draft text of a technical rollover resolution, which he proposed could serve as a proposal to present to the Russians, possibly even directly from the U.S. (see paragraph 8). A/S Gordon noted that the Russians might not even accept the technical rollover language; Vashadze repeated that at least the Russians would then be the ones to kill the UN mission. Vashadze said that other than a technical rollover, he saw two other possibilities: kill the mission, or table the German draft (an option he thought the Europeans would be unlikely to pursue).

GEORGIAN DRAFT TEXT OF TECHNICAL ROLLOVER

¶8. (SBU) Vashadze provided the following draft text.

(Begin text.)

The Security Council

Recalling all its previous resolutions on Georgia, including resolutions 1808 of 15 April 2008 (S/RES/1808), 1839 of 9 October 2008 (S/RES/1839) and 1866 of 13 February 2009 (S/RES/1866),

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General of 18 May 2009 (S/RES/254),

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1) Decides to extend the mandate of the UN mission for a new period terminating on 25 September 2009;

2) Requests the Secretary-General to further elaborate the recommendations concerning the security regime on the ground and future activities of the UN mission by September 1, 2009, taking into account future deliberations at the Geneva Discussions of July 1, 2009 and afterwards;

3) Decides to temporarily leave in force the security regime set forth in the resolution 1866 of 13 February 2009 (S/RES/1866);

4) Decides to remain actively seized of this matter.

(End text.)

¶9. (U) This cable has been cleared by A/S Gordon.

TEFFT